

Message Text

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ACTION PM-04

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 ISO-00 AID-05 DHA-02 MMO-01 NSC-05
SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PRS-01 ACDA-07
MC-02 TRSE-00 COME-00 IGA-02 EB-07 OMB-01 H-01
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FM AMEMDWSSY SANTO DOMINGO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1298
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S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 SANTO DOMINGO 4475

E.O. 11652: HPDS
TAGS: MASS, DR
SUBJECT: ASSESSMENT OF US SECURITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS FOR FY 1979

REFS: A. STATE 133136, B. SANTO DOMINGO 1448 (PARM)

1. A FRIENDLY, STABLE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC IS IMPORTANT TO THE US FOR REASONS DETAILED IN SECTION A OF REF B, NOTABLY:

A. IT IS CLOSE TO THE US--SOME 600 MILES FROM FLORIDA, 62 MILES ACROSS THE MONA PASSAGE FROM PUERTO RICO--ASTRIDE A SEA PASSAGE TO THE PANAMA CANAL, AND LOCATED BETWEEN CUBA AND PUERTO RICO.

B. SIGNIFICANT US PRESTIGE IS INVESTED IN THE COUNTRY'S STABILITY AND DEMOCRATIC VIABILITY THROUGH THE HISTORICALLY CLOSE DOMINICAN-US RELATIONSHIP AND PAST US INTERVENTIONS.

C. THROUGH ITS PROGRESS AS AN INDEPENDENT, FREE SOCIETY, IT ACTS AS A FORCE FOR MODERATE, RESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOR AND EXAMPLE TO OTHER DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IN THE VOLATILE CARIBBEAN REGION AND IN THE HEMISPHERE.

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D. IT IS THE LARGEST MARKET FOR US GOODS AND SERVICES AMONG ALL CARIBBEAN AND CENTRAL AMERICAN COUNTRIES, AN IMPORTANT OUTLET FOR US INVESTMENT, A MAJOR SOURCE OF SUGAR AND AN IMPORTANT SUPPLIER OF MINERALS AND OTHER PRODUCTS.

2. IN FURTHERANCE OF THE FOREGOING US INTERESTS, THE CURRENT AND

PROJECTED MODEST SECURITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR THE DR SERVES SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF (A) STRENGTHENING THE DOMINICAN CAPABILITY TO COMBAT INSURGENCY AND (B) PROMOTING THE PRO-US ORIENTATION OF DOMINICAN MILITARY LEADERS, WHO PLAY A KEY ROLE IN MAINTAINING THE COUNTRY'S STABILITY--A STABILITY WHICH RESTS ON FRAGILE POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS. OUR SECURITY ASSISTANCE RELATIONSHIP IS ALSO USEFUL IN HELPING THE GODR DEVELOP ITS CAPABILITIES TO PROMOTE MARITIME SAFETY, PARTICIPATE IN SEARCH AND RESCUE OPERATIONS AND INTERDICT CONTRABAND TRAFFIC AND IN ENCOURAGING THE GODR TO OBTAIN NEEDED MILITARY EQUIPMENT FROM US SOURCES (WHICH IN TURN FACILITATES US EFFORTS TO PROMOTE ARMS ACQUISITION RESTRAINT).

3. THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS ARE KEYED TO SUBPARAGRAPHS OF PARA 4 OF REF A.

A. GODR PERCEIVES THREATS OF (A) INSURGENCY, (B) DIRECT OR INDIRECT AGGRESSION FROM HAITI, AND (C) EXPORT OF CASTRO COMMUNISM DIRECTLY OR THROUGH HAITI. THE GOVERNMENT RECOGNIZES THAT IT DOES NOT HAVE THE CAPABILITY TO WITHSTAND A MAJOR OVERT MILITARY ATTACK AND THAT IT MUST RELY ON US RIO TREATY OBLIGATIONS TO MEET SUCH CONTINGENCY. CASTRO, OF COURSE, REPRESENTS A POTENTIAL THREAT TO NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES AND HE HAS IN THE PAST BACKED EFFORTS BY DOMINICAN EXILES TO INFILTRATE THE COUNTRY. HOWEVER, US INTELLIGENCE HAS NO INDICATION OF ANY CUBAN PLANS FOR OVERT MILITARY ATTACK ON THE DR OR FOR PROMOTING AN ORGANIZED DOMINICAN INSURGENCY ATTEMPT

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IN THE NEAR FUTURE. WITH RESPECT TO THE POTENTIAL THREAT FROM HAITI, GODR POLICY IS TO PROMOTE FRIENDLY RELATIONS AND COMMERCIAL TIES WHILE MAINTAINING BORDER VIGILANCE, ALSO TO CONTROL THE INFLUX OF HAITIANS AS SUGAR CANE FIELD WORKERS AND REDUCE THEIR NUMBER TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE. THIS EMBASSY DOES NOT BELIEVE THAT HAITI PRESENTS A CREDIBLE THREAT TO THE D.R. TO COPE WITH THE POTENTIAL THREAT OF INSURGENCY, THE GODR IS TRYING TO STRENGTHEN THE INTERNAL DEFENSE CAPABILITIES OF ITS SECURITY FORCES, WITH US SUPPORT. IN THE EMBASSY VIEW, NONE OF THE EXISTING EXTREMIST OR OTHER OPPOSITION GROUPS CURRENTLY HAS THE ORGANIZATION OR MEANS TO MOUNT AN EFFECTIVE INSURGENCY. HOWEVER, GIVEN THE FRAGILITY OF DOMINICAN POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS, THE HISTORY OF VIOLENCE IN THIS COUNTRY, WIDESPREAD POVERTY AND ANIMOSITIES CARRYING OVER FROM THE 1965 CIVIL WAR, A TENSE SITUATION (E.G. RELATED TO ELECTIONS) COULD DEVELOP RAPIDLY INTO A THREAT TO PUBLIC ORDER AND SUBSEQUENTLY TO CONDITIONS LEADING TO INSURGENCY.

B. THE INTERNAL THREAT PROVIDES JUSTIFICATION OF PROVISION OF A MODEST US PROGRAM OF SECURITY ASSISTANCE TO THE D.R. IN ADDITION, BOTH FMS AND IMET COMPONENTS OF THE PROGRAM FURTHER THE PRO-US ORIENTATION OF THE DOMINICAN MILITARY, WHO PLAY A KEY ROLE IN MAINTAINING THE COUNTRY'S STABILITY. A CHANGE IN THE CUBAN ATTITUDE

TO BELLIGERENCE TOWARD CARIBBEAN NEIGHBORS WOULD OF COURSE DIRECTLY
THREATEN DOMINICAN SECURITY. AN UPHEAVAL IN NEIGHBORING OVER-
POPULATED AND POVERTY-STRICKEN HAITI COULD POSE THE THREAT OF
HOSTILE INFILTRATIONS FROM THAT COUNTRY INTO THE D.R. AND COULD
BE EXPLOITED BY CUBA TO ENCOURAGE AN INSURGENCY IN THE D.R.,
SUPPORT INCURSIONS AND/OR THREATEN MORE DIG
CT MILITARY ACTION.

C. THE GODR CONSIDERS ITS PRESENT MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT OF ABOUT
20,000 (PLUS NATIONAL POLICE OF ABOUT 10,000) TO BE SUITABLE,
PROVIDED OVERAGED EQUIPMENT CAN BE REPLACED. US INTERESTS WARRANT
SUPPORT OF THIS FORCE.

D. THE FOLLOWING LIST OF ARTICLES AND SERVICES PRESUPPOSES EARLIER
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ACQUISITION OF HIGH PRIORITY ITEMS PROGRAMMED FOR FY 1977 AND 1978.
IF ONLY NEW EQUIPMENT IS AVAILABLE, THE GODR WILL PROBABLY BE ABLE
TO PURCHASE

NLY THE TOP TWO OR THREE ITEMS IN PRIORITY LISTING.

IF, AS HAS OCCURRED IN THE PAST, USED EQUIPMENT BECOMES AVAILABLE
AT BARGAIN PRICES, THE GODR MAY DEPART FROM PRIORITIES IN ORDER TO
ACQUIRE IT. THE PURPOSES SPECIFIED BELOW FOR ACQUISITION OF EACH
ITEM LISTED SERVE U.S. INTERESTS, PRIMARILY IN STRENGTHENING DOMINICA
N

INTERNAL DEFENSE CAPABILITIES. EACH ACQUISITION, IN OUR JUDGMENT,
WOULD MEET A VALID REQUIREMENT AT A REASONABLE COST.

ARTICLES

(1) HELICOPTER (1). UH1H OR SUBSTITUTE. FMS CREDIT. TO BE USED
FOR MOBILITY OF GROUND TROOPS AND SUPPLIES AND FOR CLOSE AIR SUPPORT,
IN COUNTERINSURGENCY OPERATIONS; ALSO AVAILABLE FOR SEARCH AND RESCUE
AND DISASTER RELIEF.

(2) RIFLES, M16A1 (2,000) AND AMMUNITION. COMMERCIAL. TO
COMPLETE STANDARIZATION OF SMALL ARMS INVENTORY INITIATED IN 1976.

(3) LIGHT TRAINING AIRCRAFT (2). T34C OR SUBSTITUE. COMMERCIAL.
TO REPLACE OBSOLETE TRAINERS AND F-51 COMBAT SUPPORT AIRCRAFT.

(4) PATROL BOAT (1) - FMS CASH. COASTAL SURVEILLANCE;. SEARCH AND
RESCUE.

(5) TUG BOAT (1) - FMS CASH. HARBOTR SECURITY AND MARITIME COMMERCE
.

(6) TRUCKS (21) - FMS CASH. A MIX OF VEHICLES, 1/4 TON AND 2-1/2
TON. MOBILITY OF TROOPS AND SUPPLIES IN COUNTERINSURGENCY AND
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CIVIC ACTION OPERATIONS.

(7) CRANE, 10 TON (1). COMMERCIAL. REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE OF NAVAL CRAFT.

(8) SURFACE SEARCH RADAR (1). COMMERCIAL. REDUCE COST AND IMPROVE EFFECTIVENESS OF SEAR AREA SURVEILLANCE.

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R 151450Z JUL 77
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1299
INFO SECDEF WASHDC
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S E C R E T FINAL SECTION OF 2 SANTO DOMINGO 4475

SERVICES

(1) IMET PROGRAM. GRANT AID TRAINING AT APPROXIMATE LEVEL AS THROUGH FY 1976. EMPHASIS IS ON PROFESSIONAL TRAINING, THE HIGHEST PRIORITY BEING GIVEN TO THE INFANTRY OFFICER COURSE AT USARSA, WHICH CONSTITUTES THE FOURTH YEAR OF PRE-COMMISSIONING TRAINING FOR DOMINICAN CAREER OFFICERS; AND TO COMMAND AND GENERAL STAFF LEVEL SCHOOLS IN PANAMA AND CONUS. THE GODR WILL ALSO DESIRE A LIMITED AMOUNT OF FLIGHT TRAINING TO RECONSTITUTE A CADRE OF FLIGHT INSTRUCTORS IN THEIR AIR FORCE, AND A SMALL NUMBER OF TECHNICAL COURSES RELATED TO OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE OF EQUIPMENT NOW ON HAND OR TO BE ACQUIRED.

E. THE PURCHASE OF ALL OF THE EQUIPMENT DISCUSSED IN D ABOVE, ASSUMING PRESIDENTIAL APPROVAL, WOULD NOT HAVE A SIGNIFICANT ADVERSE AFFECT ON THE NATION'S ECONOMY OR DEVELOPMENT PLANS. AS NOTED IN

SANTO DOMINGO 2747, TOTAL MILITARY SPENDING HAS CONSTITUTED ONLY 8.7 PERCENT AND 12.0 PERCENT OF TOTAL GODR EXPENDITURES IN 1975 AND 1976 RESPECTIVELY AND ONLY 2.0 AND 2.9 PERCENT OF GNP (CURRENT MILITARY EXPENDITURES DIVIDED BY GNP IN CONSTANT 1962 PRICES). PROJECTED AVERAGE ANNUAL PURCHASE OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT IN THE 1979-1983 PERIOD WOULD AMOUNT TO APPROXIMATELY 1.5 PERCENT OF THE VALUE OF TOTAL EXPORT EARNINGS. SUCH EXPENDITURES WOULD NOT SIGNIFICANTLY

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AFFECT THE NATION'S DEPT SERVICING CAPABILITY.

F. THE ONLY ADDITIONAL US PERSONNEL REQUIRED WOULD BE A FEW TECHNICIANS FOR INSTALLATION OF ANCILLARY EQUIPMENT. NO PROBLEMS ARE ANTICIPATED FROM ANY ADDED PRESENCE.

G. COMPARABLE ARTICLES AND SERVICES ARE READILY AVAILABLE FROM OTHER COUNTRIES. WHILE THE GODR PREFERS TO BUY US, IT WOULD LIKELY GO TO A THRID COUNTRY IF US REFUSED SALE.

H. ARMS CONTROL IMPACT OF ANTICIPATED SALES WOULD BE MINIMAL. THE ACQUISITION PROGRAM IS A MODEST ONE, DIRECTED PRIMARILY TO REPLACE-
MENT OF OVERAGE EQUIPMENT FOR INTERNAL DEFENSE. THE GODR CLEARLY HAS NO INTENTION OF DEVELOPING A MILITARY FORCE CAPABLE OF POSING A CREDIBLE THREAT AGAINST HAITI OR ANY OTHER COUNTRY.

I. THE DR HAS ONE OF THE MOST OPEN AND FREE SOCIEITES IN LATIN AMERICA. OVER THE PAST YEAR, THE GODR HAS TAKEN A NUM-
BER OF STEPS TO REMOVE OUTSTANDING RESTRICTIONS AND PROMOTE RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, AS REPORTED IN EMBASSY MESSAGES. CONTINUED FAVORABLE TREATMENT OF GODR SECURITY ASSISTANCE REQUESTS SHOULD REINFORCE GODR IDENTIFICATION WITH THE U.S. IN PROMOTING HUMAN RIGHTS BOTH IN DOMESTIC PRACTICES AND INTERNATIONAL OBSERVANCE (E.G. GODR ASSOCIATION WITH THE U.S. IN CO-SPONSORING THE OASGA RESOLUTION ON HUMAN RIGHTS RECENTLY APPROVED AT GRENADA) WHEREAS DENIALS OF ASSISTANCE WHICH U.S. MIGHT REASONABLY BE EXPECTED TO PROVIDE WOULD HAVE SOME NEGATIVE EFFECT ON ATTITUDES OF SENIOR MILITARY TOWARDS U.S. HUMAN RIGHTS POSITIONS, BUT WOULD PROBABLY HAVE LITTLE IMMEDIATE EFFECT ON CURRENT HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES IN THE COUNTRY.

J. THE DR HAS NO POTENTIAL AS AN ARMS SUPPLIER, EXCEPT IN THE SALE OF SMALL QUANTITIES OF OUTDATED EQUIPMENT AS IT IS

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REPLACED. RESTRAINT IN BUYING IS INEVITABLE, GIVEN THE COUNTRY'S UNFAVORABLE FOREIGN EXCHANGE POSITION AND THE

GOVERNMENT'S DEMONSTRATED RELUCTANCE TO MAKE SUBSTANTIAL EXPENDITURES FOR DEFENSE PURCHASES.

K. THE GODR CONCURS, BY AND LARGE, IN OUR PREFERRED EMPHASIS ON PROFESSIONAL TRAINING, AND IN FACT, OPTED ALMOST ENTIRELY FOR PROFESSIONAL TRAINING IN FY 1977. THEY HAVE EXPRESSED A DESIRE, WHICH WE SUPPORT, FOR CONTINUATION OF SOME TECHNICAL TRAINING, AND IN PARTICULAR, THE ADDITION OF FLIGHT TRAINING FOR THE AIR FORCE DURING FY 1978. THE GODR WOULD PROBABLY NOT PURCHASE EQUIPMENT-RELATED TRAINING UNDER FMS IF NOT AVAILABLE ON A GRANT BASIS. ALTHOUGH THE DOMINICAN MILITARY HAVE AGREED TO THE PRINCIPLE OF PAYING TRAVEL AND LIVING EXPENSES TO MAXIMIZE TRAINING AVAILABILITY, THE GODR HAS NOT SO CONTRIBUTED TO DATE. THE EXTENT, IF ANY, TO WHICH IT MAY DO SO IN FUTURE, IN VIEW OF THE PROSPECTS FOR CONTINUING DEPRESSED SUGAR PRICES AND RESULTING FOREIGN EXCHANGE DIFFICULTIES, IS HIGHLY CONJECTURAL.

4. SUMMARY COMMENTS - THE DOMINICAN MILITARY PLAY A CRUCIAL ROLE IN MAINTAINING THIS COUNTRY'S STABILITY AND THE VIABILITY OF ITS DEMOCRATIC POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS. MILITARY EXPENDITURES ARE MODEST AND FOREIGN EXCHANGE OUTLAYS ARE RIGHTLY CONTROLLED BY THE PRESIDENT. STRENGTHENING INTERNAL DEFENSE CAPABILITIES OF DOMINICAN MILITARY FORCES AND MAINTAINING A PRO-US ORIENTATION AMONG THE DOMINICAN MILITARY, PRIMARY OBJECTIVES OF OUR SECURITY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM HERE, PROMOTE OVERALL U.S. OBJECTIVES IN THIS COUNTRY AND REGION. THE PROJECTED FY 79 PROGRAM - \$1 MILLION IN FMS AND \$750,000 IN IMET - IS, IN MY JUDGMENT, WELL DESIGNED TO SERVE THESE OBJECTIVES AT REASONABLE COST, AND IS FULLY CONSISTENT WITH U.S. POLICIES OF RESTRAINT ON ARMS TRANSFERS, PROMOTING RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, AND MULTILATERAL CONVENTIONAL ARMS CONTROL.

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